A Score of Songs

A

SCORE OF SONGS

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TO

My Dear Father and Mother

I AFFECTIONATELY DEDICATE THIS BOOK.

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A SCORE OF SONGS.

THE WHITE SHIP.

WHITE are the sails of yonder ship,
Slowly she floats along;
Over the waters still and deep
Rings her sailors' song.

O'er her head the night-clouds move,
Driven by wind and weather—
On the restless waves she speeds
With the lightness of a feather.

Far in the east a cloud appears,
Followed by many another—
But still the sailors' song rings out—
What care they for cloudy weather?

Loudly the gale begins to blow,
The waves are tipped with white,
Over the face of nature comes
A strange, unnatural light.

Still from the ship the song rings out,
Filling the stormy air,
But the notes are weird and doleful ones,
Their echo—the cry of despair.

One more peal of the thunder wild,
One more sweep of the gale—
The moon peeps through a riven cloud
Down on a lone floating sail.

Gone is the ship and its sailors
Down in the fathomless deep,
Lulled by tempest and thunder
To their quiet eternal sleep.

Floats the lone sail to the harbor,
In the same track that before
Sailed the White Ship and her burden
Off from the fast-fading shore.

Washed by the waves on the shore stretch,
Buried by sand out of sight,
Hid from the brightness of daylight,
Concealed by the darkness of night.

Many long days have departed
Since from her deck rang the cheers,

Now o'er her memory and absence
Forgetfulness strengthens with years.

Many more white ships are sailing
Over the spot where before
Loud roared the wind and the tempest,
Sank the White Ship from the shore.

Still sing the sailors as gayly
On their ships tossed like a feather,
They are light-hearted and gladsome—
What do they care for the weather?

MEMORIES OF CHILDHOOD.



BRING to me now fond memory,
Those days so long since passed,
Those hours of fullest pleasure—
Ah! yes, too sweet to last.
The time when I played in the orchard,
Childish, light-hearted and free,
When I mocked the birds in their singing,
And laughed with innocent glee.

When the flowers were my favorite playmates,
The cricket my greatest delight,
And its chirping the sweetest of music
From dawn till the coming of night.

Then the brook in its rippling wavelets
Carried my love to the sea,
And the wind, as it stirred the tall grasses,
Told many sweet secrets to me.
Come back to me, days of childhood,
With your laughter, your song and your jest,
For to-night my heart is weary,
And my spirit longs for rest.
Oh, come to me then in my dreaming,
As you were in the days of yore;
Let me but feel once your presence,
Then vanish for evermore.

PHANTOM HANDS.

LONG years ago—
I watched two hands glide o'er the keys,
They moved so slow, but yet with ease,
And in each sound there was a strain
Which spoke of sorrow and of pain;

A wail of hearts with care oppressed,
Who sighing lived and longed for rest.

Each chord was blended rich and rare
By these two hands long, ghostly, fair.
I nearer drew to lay my own
Upon the keys, but they were gone,
And in their place I heard this strain—
No heart can live without some pain.

I bowed my head upon the keys,
While round me moved the gentle breeze,
And whispered in my listening ear—
The heart that wins must never fear.
I raised my head and gazed around—
I saw no form nor heard no sound.

Yet on the keys beside my own,
Two phantom hands were pressed alone,
And, spirit-like, with mine they drew
From out the keys a reverie new,
Which seemed to me like sighing breeze,
When rustling in the poplar trees—
Like moaning waves on ocean side,
As voices speaking in the tide.
They rested quiet, then moved away—
I raised my eyes, 'twas break of day,
And they were gone.

A MEMORY.

THE waves of time are dashing
Upon life's rock-bound shore,
And echo back the whisper—
'Tis gone for evermore.
Their ripples, like the years of life,
Float towards the setting sun,
One glance upon the fading shore,
They break and all is done.
The moon comes up with silver light
Upon the dark, blue deep,
The billows rock to right and left,
While Nature's children sleep.
The morning dawns with rosy light,
The waves beat on the shore,
But still the self-same echo comes,
'Tis gone for evermore.

THREE STORIES.

A BIRD is mournfully singing
Out on a bough of the tree,
For the wind its nest has broken
And killed its birdlings three.

A rose by the wall is drooping
  Its beautiful queenly head,
The frost has breathed so coldly
  That its sister buds are dead.

A human heart is heavy
  With sorrow and deepest woe,
A friend of trust and affection
  Has become its deadliest foe.

On the morrow the bird sings gayly;
  Its mournful strains have fled—
The rose has found a companion,
  But love in that heart lies dead.

HARPA.

BESIDE a lyre of modern days—
  She stands as in a heavenly haze—
  With sweet seraphic modest gaze—
    And all are wonder-struck.

Across the chords her small hands glide;
As moves the constant crystal tide
Upon the great chaffed ocean side,
    At sunset's glorious hour.

It must have been the angels lent,
Into the strings her fingers bent,—
A strain from highest heavens sent,
So sweet the mellow chords.

MY DREAM.

I ONCE heard a strain of music
As it floated out to sea,
And for years I waited to hear it again,
But it came not back to me.

I once had a friend with a loving heart,
But angels came from the sky,
And on heavenly pinions of purest gold,
Wafted her spirit on High.

Last night an angel with shining lyre
Played me a heavenly strain;
It filled my heart with a glad delight,
The lost were with me again.

PERFECTION.

THERE has never shone a sunny sky
Without some fleecy speck.
There has never roared an ocean-storm
Without some fearful wreck.
There has never been a perfect life
Without some little cloud.
There has never beat a human heart
That hath not cried aloud.
There has never been a fairy clime
That offered perfect rest.
If you wish to find perfection,
Seek the Loving Saviour's Breast.

A THOUGHT.

(TO MARGARET.)

TO love for God is noble and like to angel fair—
To love all creatures through him, 'tis sweet and yet 'tis rare.

ELVIRE.

YES, the sun hath risen,
And the sun hath set,
And thou art with me, dearest, yet—
E'er long we will be parted.

See, the flowers have oped,
And the flowers have died,
And still thou lingerest by my side—
But whisper of this parting.

When the roses bloom,
And the fire-flies glow,
I know thy cherished form must go,
And leave me heavy hearted.

And the years will roll,
As my sad tears flow,
My heart no other love can know—
Since you and I are parted.

But a morn will dawn,
When the Heavenly tide
Will drift your spirit to my side—
In the land where dies all parting.

HER VOICE.

IN Heaven the Angels formed it,
In the land of praise and love;
They wove in it dew and sweetness
Culled from the flowers above—
They tuned its chords from their lyres;
While the breezes made it strong,
'Twas filled with golden ripples,
A perfect voice of song.
And then to earth they brought it,
To leave with a mortal fair,
To use it in praising her master,
A treasure to guard with care.
Each note that its chords may utter,
Pierces the blue vault above,
And rings in the Sainted Mansions,
As an earthly strain of love.
May these notes which seek the heavens,
Still rise for many a day;
But when they grow softer, fainter,
And are slowly dying away,
May her soul on wings of whiteness
Follow this song of love,
And her last sweet strain of earth
Be her first in Heaven above.

THE TEMPEST.

THE bark on the waves tossed wildly,
The darkened heavens wept;
While 'mid the wind and tempest,
Our Holy Saviour slept.

The Disciples, filled with terror,
Gazed on the sea and sky,
And from their hearts and bosoms
Arose a fearing cry.

O save us, Lord, we perish!
And Jesus from His sleep,
Upheld His hand in order,
Above the raging deep.

While to His trembling children
He spoke in accents mild,
"Oh, ye of little faith—
Why fear the tempest wild?"

Then on the roaring waters
Was poured a soothing balm,
While o'er the face of Nature
There fell a gentle calm.

The Disciples gazed in wonder,—
With lips and hearts they say—
Ah, who is He the Mighty
Which the winds and the waves obey.

Oft we in our barks tossed wildly
Forget that Our Saviour is nigh;
We gaze on the storm around us,
And not on His face on high.

TWO EASTER DAWNINGS.

'TWAS early morn—
So slowly the sun had risen
To usher in the day—
That sparkling like jewels resplendent
The dew on the grass-tops lay:
While the slender beams of sunlight
Had woven a garment rare,
Of mist, and of shadows, and dawning,
To spread o'er Nature fair.

She seeking comes—
While the day is slowly appearing,
She, once the vessel of sin,
And looks in darkened sepulchre,
But, alas, she sees not Him.

Her heart grows faint and weary,
While tears to her sad eyes rush,
And a sigh like a requiem sombre
Pierces the death-like hush.

Why weep ye ?
List ! 'tis the voice of the angels,
Who, close by the rocky bed,
With wings outstretched in shelter
Where rested the Saviour's head.
She cries, they have taken my Master
And laid Him I know not where.
But the angels break not silence,
On guard in their robes so fair.

Why weep ye ?
She turns at a voice so assuring,
Yet the face she does not know ;
"Tell me where rests my Master,
That I to Him may go."
Then Jesus saith to her, *Mary*,
In a voice so tender and sweet,
That it fills her heart with gladness,
And she kneels at His sacred feet.

Master, Rabonni !
And gazing in mute adoration,
Her passionate love then said,

I have found my King and Master,
The Lord I thought was dead.
From His feet her eyes she raises,
To His side where entered the spear,
She looks in His face in raptures,
That face to her so dear.

Time has passed,—
The years and days fast are rolling
In a steady, constant round,
Since weeping, lowly and sighing
Mary her Master found.
Since the dawn in that lovely garden,
She knelt at His sacred feet,
And listened with feelings enraptured
To His voice so low and sweet.

'Tis early morn,
The dawn o'er the hills advancing,
Announces in Nature's lay,
As its track grows deeper and deeper,
The mighty king of day.
The heavenly word *Alleluia*
Floats on the rising breeze,
And we hear its faithful echo
In the songsters of the trees.

Whom seek ye ?—
And fondly our hearts give the answer,
While our lips the few words say,
We seek our King and Master,
Who is risen since early day.
We wish at His dear feet to worship,
To list to His heavenly voice,
With Mary of old we are joyous,
In finding our heart's first choice.

Christ is risen !—
A rapturous heavenly music
Falls on the charmèd ear,
A strain of *Alleluias*—
It swells as it passes near.
A choir of angels are singing,
As they bear our hearts away,
To lay as an Easter offering
At the throne of our King to-day.



THE SANCTUARY LAMP.

WHAT does it say as it burns so bright
Before the King of kings—
What are the words it whispers,
What are the praises it sings?
Perhaps it is telling the Saviour
Of some heart full of woes.
Ah! no—for Jesus tells us
That the least of His lambs He knows.
Perhaps it is speaking of some fair child
Offering its infant prayer.
Ah! no—for our Saviour Himself has said
Of such is My kingdom fair.

List! do you hear the flutter of wings?
An angel from heaven above
Is waiting to tell your anxious heart
That the lamp is speaking of *love*.
Of the love of a gentle Jesus,
Longing to call you His own—
Oft in His patient watchings
Insulted, neglected, alone.
And this lamp as it burns so brightly,
With its flame towards heaven above,
Is the guard unchanging, unfailing,
Of the kingly prisoner of love.

RESIGNATION.

RINGING slow a funeral knell,
Tolls the convent's ancient bell
Through the stilly air.

As from out the cloister door,
Noiseless o'er the stony floor,
March the cowled religious.

Shaven head and pallid face,
Deep the lines and furrows traced
By the hands of labor.

Rich their manly voices rise,
Till they pierced the cloud-decked skies,
In the De Profundis.

In their midst is borne a bier,
With a form—a brother dear—
Wrapped in monkish habit.

'Neath the white cross on yon hill,
Where their dead sleep—holy, still—
They will lay him down.

Dust to dust, the abbot saying,
While the holy monks are praying
For their brother's soul.

Still the bell its knell is tolling,
As the earth is swiftly rolling
Down upon the dead.

One by one the torches dying,
Kissed by breezes softly sighing,
Silent rests the bell.

Then the monks in slow procession,
With a holy, calm expression,
Softly move away.

* * * * *

Once again the bell is ringing,
While the monks, the vespers singing,
Kneel within their stalls.

"Deo gratias," chants the abbot,
In his long and sombre habit,
And the monks reply, "Amen."

THE ARTIST.

TO a poor and lowly artist,
Yet unknown to wealth and fame,
'Neath Bohemia's brilliant heavens
Once a mighty monarch came.
With his bags of gold and jewels
And his haughty, proud command:
"You must paint for me a picture,
One whose fame will fill the land;
Let it be a holy subject,
Quite unknown to all but thee.
When thy task is full completed,
Let the work be brought to me.
If the painting suits my fancy,
Then this gold to thee I'll give—
From that hour, devoid of trouble,
Thou may'st long in comfort live."
Thus the mighty monarch left him
To his dreams of joy and wealth—
Doubtful were the thoughts he harbored,
Painful were the fears he felt.
Yes, to see a prize before him
Meet to win the proudest man,
And to know the gulf between it
Scarce his humble soul can span.

With such thoughts to cause him anguish,
Fain his heart hot tears would weep ;
But the gods become his succor,
And he loses self in sleep.

* * * *

In the arbor sing the night-birds,
Through the vines about the door
Silver moonbeams dance and gambol
With the shadows on the floor.
By the dreamer's couch so lowly,
Spirit fair—an angel stands.
In his own, so soft, confiding,
Clasps he fast the artist's hands,
And from out the humble cottage
Float they noiselessly away—
From the shades of gloom and sadness
To a clime of endless day.
Swift they pass o'er glen and valley,
Rippling brook and hillside green,
Till they meet two rugged mountains,
With a hamlet small between.
Pure its homes, so white and lowly,
And its ways so calm and still,
That sweet thoughts, profound and holy,
Fast the dreaming painter fill.

Right before one tiny cottage,
Far more lowly than the rest,
Slow the twain are now descending,
Soon the earth their feet have pressed.

* * * * *

Round an open doorway hanging,
Lovely roses, fragrant, fair—
Framing to the wondering artist
Clear a picture, beauteous, rare :—
By a bench of rough boards standing,
Works a man both bent and old ;
At his side a child is watching,
With fair locks like threads of gold—
In whose curls the happy sunbeams,
Passing by in search of play,
Seeing there this lovely infant,
Then no farther wished to stray.
Near the worker, slowly spinning,
Casting off her threads with care,
Sits a modest, lovely maiden,
On her lips a trembling prayer.
And the artist's soul is ravished
By this peaceful, restful scene—
At his silent, bright companion,
Looks to see what this may mean.

But the angel smiles in answer.
Then the artist turns once more,
With fond eyes to watch the vision
Through the rose-framed, open door.
Sees the old man working steady,
While with care his plane he moves
O'er a rough, uneven surface,
Into lines, and dents, and grooves.
And the child beside him watching,
Follows close each careful turn,
Trying with His infant fingers
Quick his simple task to learn.
Speaks the maiden at her spinning—
She, the mother of the child—
Often to the aged worker,
In a tongue unknown, yet mild.

* * * * *

Now the scene grows misty, dimmer,
And the vision fades away
Like the melting of soft cloud-banks
At the close of summer's day.
Round the air seems cold and chilly,
Moves the artist in his sleep—
Fast the early dawn is breaking,
With its light the hillsides steep.

Slowly now his eyes are opening
To the work of coming day,
While his heart and captive fancy,
Happy, wander far away.
From his couch he quickly rises,
To obey his king's command,
And on canvas smooth and even
Traces, with a steady hand,
Forms that in his dreams have wandered—
Aged man and gentle child;
At her spinning, as he saw her,
Places too the mother mild.
For long days and hours he labors,
Until aged, gray and bent,
Yet his face grows hourly fairer,
While his strength seems nearly spent.
One bright day his task is over,
And the artist drops his brush—
Yes, his heart has ceased its beating
In the twilight's gentle hush.

* * * * *

To the king was brought the picture,
While in purple richly dressed—
In the vault of some old chapel
Was the artist laid to rest.

Time has passed in steady marches,
Bearing with it hosts of dead;
Fleeting joys on wings have vanished,
Ancient splendors too have fled.
While this lowly artist's picture,
Living in its sphere sublime,
Yet unmoved by passing ages
And untouched by hands of time,
Traced upon the walls of memory
Of each loving Christian heart,
Fondly treasured, often copied,
Surely it can ne'er depart.

BIRTHDAY WISHES.

(TO ANNETTE.)

I WOULD pluck a bunch of roses,
With fragrance breathing sweet,
And in garland form would lay them
At the loving Saviour's feet;
That their perfume—Nature's incense—
Circling round the heavenly throne,
Would be bearer of the favors
I would ask for you alone.

They would be a life of sunshine,
All earth's brightest and its best,
With a twilight calm and peaceful,
Then a home among the blest.

AU REVOIR.

A BIRD with plumes like drifted snow,
Winged its flight with the day's first glow,
Out towards the restless, rolling sea,
And its song, a lay of fullest glee,
Was, prisoned soul dost envy me.

The waves rolled up and kissed the strand,
As the snow-white bird from the hazy land
Dipped its wings in the sparkling crest—
That diamond dewed its downy breast
In its passage towards the glowing West.

At the sunset hour it neared the shore,
But its song had fled for evermore,
On a rising wave its limp form sped—
Ah, pity me, its spirit said,
My rapid wings are stiff and dead.

A DAY-DREAM.

WHAT enchantment lies before me—
What a picture fair to view!
Am I in a land of wonders,
In some country strange and new?

Fair around me spreads a valley,
Bordered by a mountain high—
In some places low, uneven,
Others peaked to pierce the sky.

Just beneath me lies a hamlet,
With its simple white-thatched homes;
Humble in their simple beauty,
There are seen no stately domes.

From this hamlet leads a pathway
To the valley far below—
Glistening with its dew and verdure,
Underneath the sun's warm glow.

Down this mossy, rocky pathway
Comes a man of age and care;
By his side, with infant footsteps,
Walks a child both young and fair.

One small hand, so soft and dimpled,
Holds the old man in his palm,
While the child is happy, laughing,
He is silent, thoughtful, calm.

See, the infant lips are parted,
And the face lights with a smile;
"Father, tell of this music,
For I hear it all the while;

"In the morn it greets my waking,
And my heart feels light and gay;
All day long it hovers round me;
But it stops at close of day."

"Son," the old man kindly answered,
"To the God who rules above,
Little birds their praise are singing:
'Tis fair Nature's song of love."

"And these lovely little blossoms,
Growing by the dusty way—
Do they send, too, in their gladness,
Up to God a thankful lay?"

"Yes, my son, they bloom contented,
While their incense, rich and rare,
Floating to their kind Creator,
Fills with sweets the balmy air.

"And this Father up in Heaven,
Knows each bird and tiny flower,
Hears the falling of each sparrow,
Sees the death of every hour."

Thus they walk in holy converse,
Aged man and gentle child,
Out beyond the quiet hamlet,
At the noon hour, sunny, mild.

But around their pathway lingering,
Choirs of angels, bright and fair,
Unseen to the world around them,
With sweet music fill the air.

Still the birds are gayly singing
In the thicket and the tree,
Still the gentle breeze of summer
Floats in and returns to sea.

But the stones and rocky pathway
Soon have tired the baby feet;
Then the old man lifts him gently
Up into a mossy seat.

Close beside a tiny fountain,
Where the sparkles, as they leap,
Making soft delicious music,
Lull the little one to sleep.

Angels bear his thoughts to dream-land.
To his heavenly Father's home,
While the old man—patient watcher—
Sits besides the child alone.

Fast the evening dew is falling,
Over woodland, dell and flower,
And the song of birds grows fainter—
'Tis the lovely sunset hour.

Calm the watcher takes the infant
In his loving, kind embrace,
Lays the little head of ringlets
Close against his withered face.

Up the pathway, steep and rugged,
Gently bears the sleeping one,
He, the loving foster-father,
And the child, his foster-son.

Soft the baby arms so cunning
Round him lovingly are pressed,
Till he lays the dreaming infant
On its gentle mother's breast.

Long she gazes on her dear one,
With his happy, childish face:
She can see his God-like beauty,
Too—the crown of thorns can trace.

Fast the twilight hour advances,
While my vision fades away,
And I see the shades of evening
Close around the dying day.

All the earth is lost in slumber,
E'en the flowers are faded,—dead,
While the stars in minor numbers,
Chant the dirges of the dead.

In my soul sweet thoughts are rising
Of the aged man and child ;
In my fancy still there lingers
Heavenly faces—holy, mild.

To my mind there comes a picture
Of our souls, at close of day,
Sinking, weary, by some fountain
That we meet upon our way.

With the death-dew o'er us falling,
One is standing by our side,
Stretching forth his hands to help us
Makes himself our holy guide.

In the arms that bore his Jesus
We are gently, calmly pressed,
Till we reach our home in heaven,
In the land of perfect rest.

TO A MOTHER.

(ON HER FEAST DAY.)

WHAT fairer scene can glad the eye
Than dawning day with opal sky—
With breezes from the friendly sea,
With ringing song of joyous bird,
When rent in twain the shades of night
Its music far and wide is heard
By man from slumber waking.

And this expanse of sky so fair
Is seen in God's world everywhere;
Within the inland sunny bower,
Where distant as the eye can know,
The woods and hills and waking vales
With Nature's richest verdure glow,
A picture of perfection.

Above the sea where sparkling crest
Seeks ne'er repose or quiet rest,
The heavens with their gauzy dress,
The night exchanging robes with day—
The air is filled with shadows black,
While sea-birds sing their doleful lay
And God rules over all.

'Tis early dawn beside the sea—
The shades before Aurora flee—
And on the silvery-painted crest

Some barks are waiting for the light,
To leave the kindly sheltered shore
Until it slowly fades from sight—
A memory of the happy past.

The breezes as by angels stirred,
Across the sands are feebly heard,
The tiny barks, like spirits white,
Rise on the waves, then float away,
Their sails are filled with friendly breeze,
As enters full the King of Day,
Upon his brilliant track.

The sailors sing with lithesome heart—
For in their thoughts fear has no part.
Their songs across the waters roll,
And echoes seek the old home shore,
And enter in the hearts of those,
Whose eyes shall see the barks no more
Until the coming evening.

The sailors smile at thought of wreck—
So clear the sky without a speck,
How dash upon the cruel rock,
When right before them in the west
A light-house with its beacon clear
Upon the black rock's highest crest
By kindly hands is planted.

Its light is there by night and day;
They see its glimmer far away;

It seems to gaze upon each bark,
To feel each sound and faintest sigh;
Reflected in the sea around,
It floods the clear unclouded sky,
'Neath which the barks are sailing.

But list! we hear a breeze arise
While still serene the evening skies—
It comes—the loving hand of God,
And waves some barks to nearer shore;
The others drift far out of sight,
As if their fate forevermore
Was battling with the ocean.

The breezes swell from every part;
Fast terror fills each sailor's heart;
The lightning pierces blackest space,
'Twixt heaven and earth a fiery way;
The sailors see its deadly track,
As mingling with the light of day,
It darts into the ocean.

The winds and waves loud revels hold;
The ocean spray grows angry, bold;
The three in tempest strongly joined,
Then toss the little barks about,
And cutting off the snowy sails
To greater make the merry rout
Was ever such a tempest?

But look ! above the raging storm,
On far-off rocks appears a form,
Stern lined against the angry sky,
With gleaming light like jewel rare,
As ruby red, or sapphire pale,
It shimmers through the troubled air
And cheers the storm-tried sailors.

With tearful eyes each one doth gaze
Upon it through the ocean's haze ;
It is the guide that from the shore,
In youth's bright guileless hour,
A kindly hand had pointed towards,
And taught their heart its power
When starting on Life's ocean.

Slow shifting like a silvery sheen,
The angry sky looks now serene ;
The waves are silent in their rest ;
Within their depths is mirrored clear
Aerial beauty, with a smile
Which spreads itself both far and near,
While rainbows span the heavens.

The day hath done its work full well,
And twilight sings its peaceful knell ;
The sailors feel a restful calm,
And fold their hands in evening prayer ;

No sound but gently rippling wave
Disturbs the stilly evening air,
As drift they into harbor.

Before each bark float spirits bright,
Whose wings give forth a radiant light
That sheds itself upon each face—
Into the eyes that gazing long
Upon the shore of golden rocks,
They hear a wondrous, happy song,
The strains of choirs of angels.

The harbor wide with waters still,
Seems fast with other barks to fill;
And lo!—they hear the Master's voice,
Who bids them come upon the shore;
He takes them to His palace grand,
To be their home forever more,
They're safely launched in Heaven.

And then the Master calls the band
Of storm-tried sailors from the land,
And tells them that when tempest rift,
He, from his throne above,
Gazed fondly on the many woes
That tried His children's love
Upon life's stormy ocean.

And then they tell Him of the light
That made the darkest moment bright;

And of the one who built the tower
Upon the sea-lashed ocean rock;
Who placed it firm upon its seat,
A proof to any fearful shock,
This brightly-gleaming light-house.

How there from dawn till fall of night
They saw its welcome, cheery light;
Its walls were made of mother's love,
Of kindness, patience, faith and prayer;
Its lamp, the flame of charity,
Was trimmed and by her lighted there
Above temptation's breakers.

Then send ye waves and rushing tide,
Ye ripples that so sweetly glide,
Ye birds that fill the stormy air
With notes so rich and sweet;
Ye breezes bring from every clime,
And cull from every flower ye meet,
Some sweets to feast our mother.

Ye spirits of a festive day,
From spirit land steal soft away,
And skim from off the seething wave,
And from the ocean's rising crest,
A store of jewels and ripples sweet,
In which our words and thoughts are dressed
To feast a loving mother.

And then our prayer for her departs
Unto the sweetest of all hearts;
Across the sea of Paradise,
Untouched by storm or ocean strife,
This prayer, by angels guarded safe,
Will touch the piers of endless life
To moor her safe in Heaven.

ARBUTUS BUDS.

WOULD you list to a simple story
Of a May flower long ago,
Which grew in a distant country
'Neath the Orient's brilliant glow?
'Tis only an idle fancy,
A dream that comes with the hour,
All fragrance and sweetness and beauty,
Could mortal resist its power?

'Twas right where Judea's valley
Slumbered beneath the sun,
Gold bathing its humble hamlets
Till the summer's day was done.
Where breezes with burdens of perfume
Gamboled and played by the hour,
And stole in their onward travel
New beauties from each sylvan bower.

Where the purling of fresh dripping water
But mingled its silvery tone
With the lays of the birds and the zephyrs
That echoed the pine's solemn moan.
Ah! this was a Garden of Eden,
A spot where the spirit could rest,
A bower which the sun, in deep raptures,
For ages and ages caressed.

Then come with me, lovers of Nature,
Away from the world's deafening strife,
To the home of this fair, simple blossom,
All beauty and freshness and life.
'Tis only a bud of Arbutus,
In a garb both rusty and brown;
Its ocean-shell tinted flower-cups,
And stems deep mantled in down.

And yet on this tiny floweret,
Many long years ago,
The sun shone down one spring day
With such fierce and deadly glow,
That it pressed its tiny petals
'Gainst the side of the mossy well,
(For it grew by the Scriptural Fountain,)
And it thought that the drops which fell

From the jars of the mothers and maidens,
Who came at the break of day,

Down the valley from Judea
Would drive its thirst away.
And sighed if I had but perfume
(For it had no odor then),
I could waft a breath of sweetness
To greet some maiden when

She stooped to draw the water;
Oh! she would heed my woe.
Thus spoke the dying floweret,
Ages, long ages ago.
And then its head drooped lower,
While its leaves pressed parchèd earth,
For life was slowly ebbing
Towards Him who gave it birth.

When lo! Oh, radiant beauty,
Fair star without a peer,
A vision, bright, bewildering,
Was slowly drawing near.
Yes, down the narrow pathway
Comes one that sunrise hour,
A daughter of Judea,
A being of magic power.

She draws near to the fountain,
Her eyes, cast down, behold
The dying little blossom
Amid the mossy mold.

And with a heart whose kindness
All faithful souls have felt,
She took some crystal water,
And fondly, as she knelt,

Around its roots and leaflets
She pressed her moistened hands,
And smiled upon the floweret,
The Queen of Angel Bands.
What need to tell the story
Of what you sure must know;
Could Mary touch a creature
And then its life not glow

With new and deepest beauty,
And soulful perfume rare,
The fondest of all mothers,
The heavenly Queen so fair?
If you would test my legend,
Why, come with me to-day,
Behold Dame Nature's beauties,
Fair Flora's spring array.

The violets are slumbering,
The wind flower on the hill
Is dreaming, quite unconscious
That the rushing new-born rill
Is calling, as it passes—
Awake! Awake! my dear,

Your wintry sleep is over,
Arbutus Buds are here.

Arbutus Buds are opening
Amid the rocks and sand,
The rarest, sweetest, earliest
Spring's herald in our land.
And now let memory bear you
To days of long ago,
When first this child of Nature
Drooped 'neath an Orient glow.

And bless the hands which gave it
Fresh water from the well,
Who steeped its buds in perfume,
And wrapt her magic spell
Around its life and beauty,
Till kindly waves and winds
Then bore its seeds in plenty
To other sunny climes.

Oft when in Life's long travel
You meet by dusty way,
This sweet New England Spring-child,
Whose perfume fills my lay,
Then read this idle fancy,
This dream that came with the hour,
All fragrance, and sweetness, and beauty,
Could mortal resist its power?